at different points, sharing of infrastructure for providing Village Public Telephones (VPTs).

(c) The private basic operators are free to enter into mutually acceptable agreement with any of the other operators in their respective service areas for providing VPTs.

Failure of Garuda Cellular Phone Service

2643. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL's cellular phone service "Garuda" has found to be most unsuccessful as reported in the 'Hindu' dated the 28th March, 2002;

(b) if so, whether the private cellular phone companies are providing much better service than that of MTNL;

(c) if so, the facts thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the MTNL to adopt the latest technologies in its cellular phone services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) No, Sir. MTNL has received very good response on Garuda service.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

(d) MTNL's cellular phone service uses GSM Technology which is at par with the best technology available.